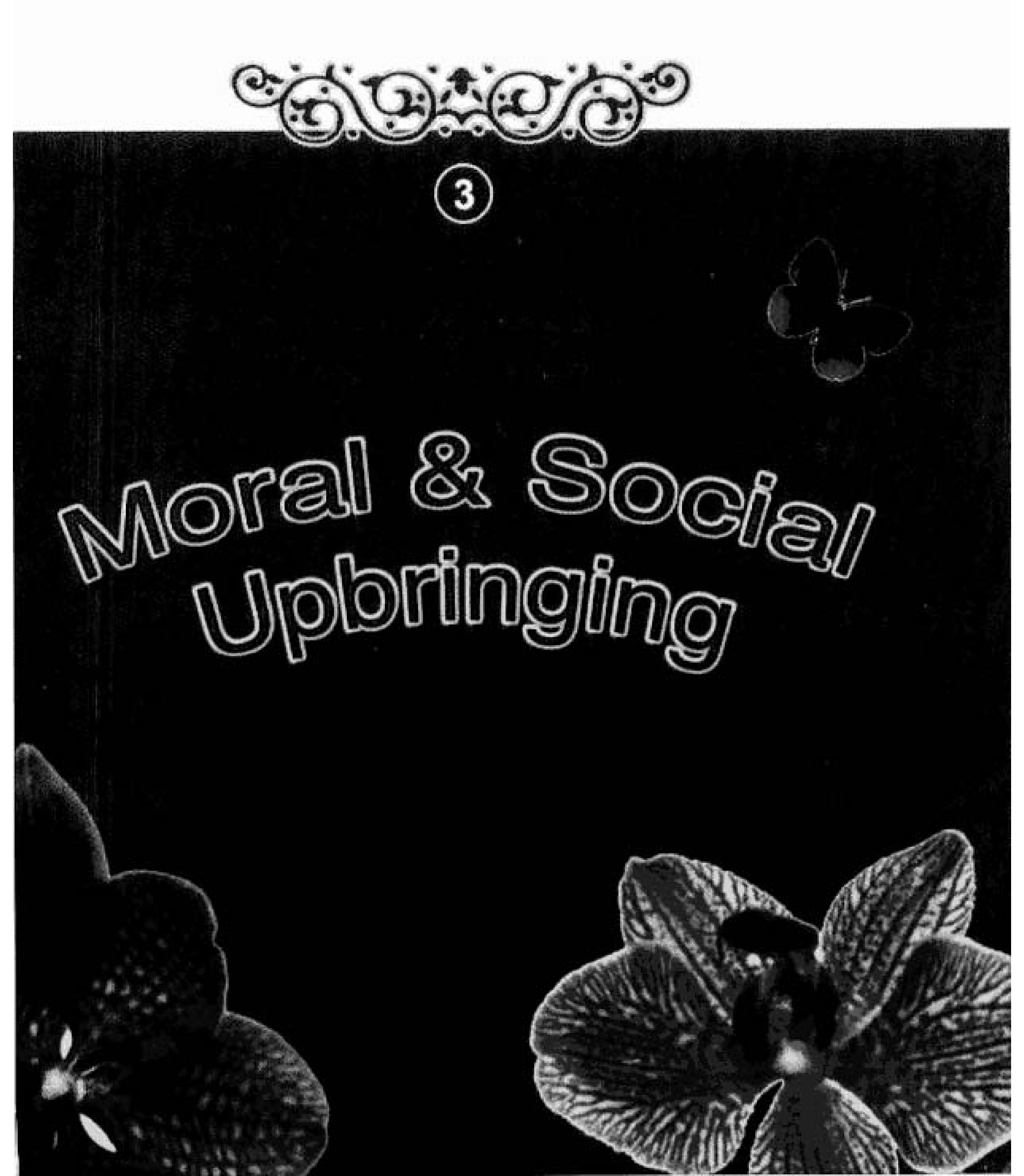
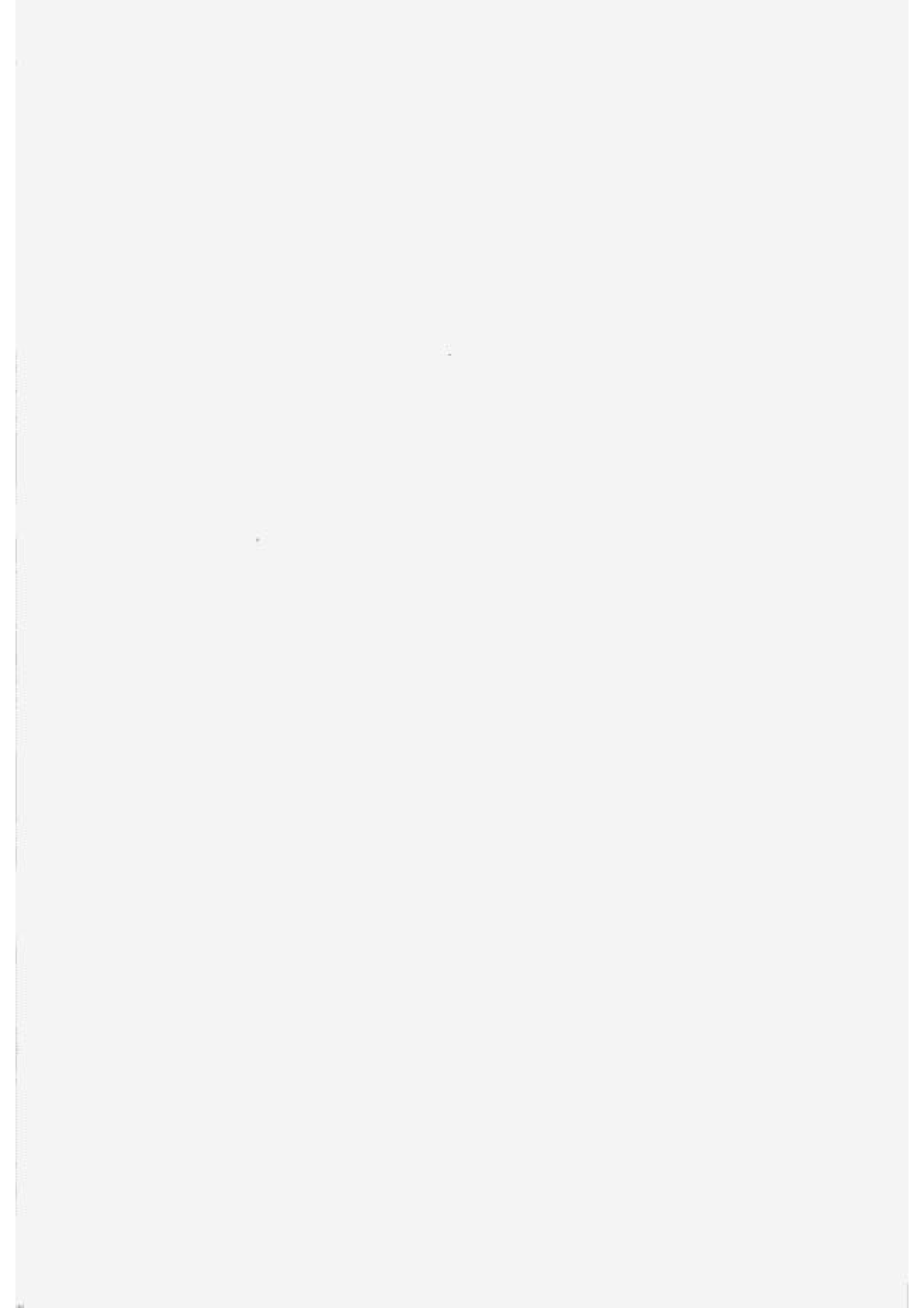
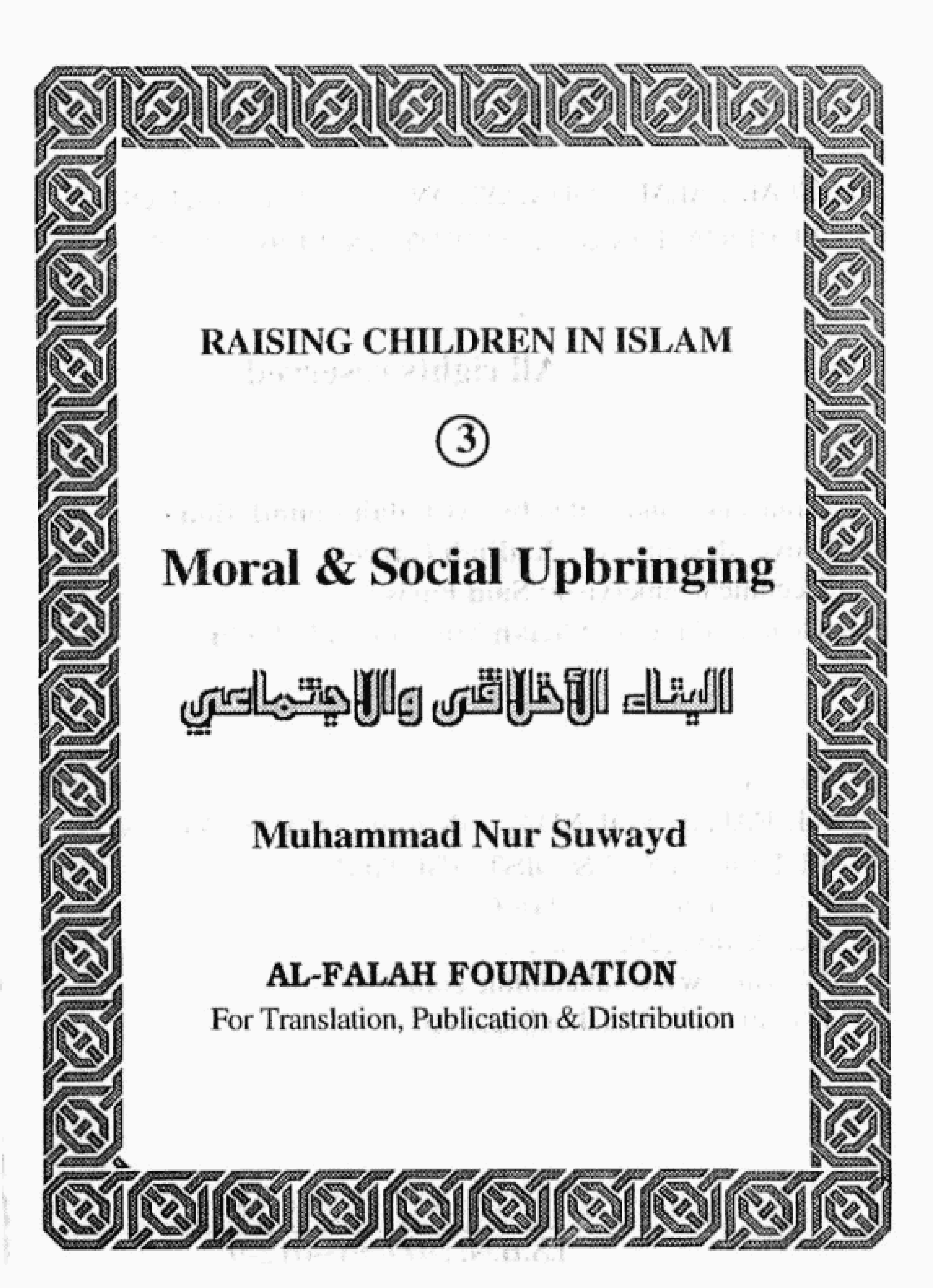
RAISING CHILDREN IN ISLAM

Muhammad Nur ibn `Abd al-Hafizh.Suwayd







RAISING CHILDREN IN ISLAM

3

Moral & Social Upbringing

البناء الأخلاقي والاجتماعي

Muhammad Nur Suwayd

AL-FALAH FOUNDATION
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Preface

The Muslim's attachment to the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the strongest among all human relations. Also, he feels that he loves the Prophet (peace be upon him) more than himself and all mankind. Moreover, Almighty Allah states in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an that the Prophet (peace be upon him) is closer to the believers than themselves.

This deep attachment to the Prophet (peace be upon him) is instilled into the hearts and minds of Muslim children at a very young age. He (peace be upon him) is the ideal that every Muslim follows and the source of the great *Shari`ah* that the true Muslim adheres to. He exemplified all that brings us close to Allah or enhances our life. He thoroughly guided us to the extent that greatly surprised the Jews who said that our Prophet has taught us everything.

In this rapidly developing world, Muslim children are faced with enormous challenges in a largely secular environment, and parents are in urgent need of returning to the pure Islamic system.



The Principles of Moral Upbringing

Ibn al-Qayyim stated the following in his precious book *Ahkam Al-Mawlud*, "Among the things which a child strongly needs is the nurturing of his morals. He grows up according to what his parents have inculcated in him during his childhood. If they inculcated in him solitude, anger, obstinacy, hastiness, frivolity, recklessness, irritability or greed it would be so difficult for him to avoid such things in future. For sure, these manners turn to be deep-rooted traits and aspects that, if he does not guard against them, will cause him dishonor one day. Therefore, a lot of persons are corrupted due to their improper upbringing."

The late erudite sheikh Muhammad al-Khidr Husayn, the former sheikh of al-Azhar, emphasized the importance of utilizing the period of childhood in implanting moralities in the child saying, "The

What is reported in culcating moralities in children

The significance of inculcating moralities in our children is revealed more and more when we know that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) emphasized it many times in his honorable *hadiths*. Furthermore, he (peace be upon him) preferred it to giving charity.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*It is better for a man to cultivate his child than to give on a measure of food.*"[1]

Also, he (peace be upon him) guided parents to the best gift to be presented to their children, which is instilling moralities in them. Actually, it is the best heritage for our children. Thus, our honorable Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*A parent doesn't grant his child a gift better than instilling moralities in him.*"[2]

Therefore, `Ali al-Madini (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "Bequeathing moralities to children is better than bequeathing money to them. Moralities will help them gain money, high rank, love of others

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1. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.
2. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.

and the goodness of the worldly life and the Hereafter."[1]

Some might overlook the importance of moralities considering them as a minor issue, unaware of the fact that by doing so, they make it easy for their children to be ungrateful to them. Indeed, the parents' duty to instill moralities in their children is as necessary as their duty of sustaining them. It was related on the authority of Ibn Majah that Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*Honor your children and educate them well.*"

The righteous predecessors recognized the importance of morality, its weight and magnitude, so they raised their children to observe it and advised the *Ummah* to follow their steps. The honorable Companion `Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) addressed every parent in a mild way, setting up an equation, saying, "Educate your child because you are responsible for educating and edifying him, just as he is required to devote and obey you."

1. Imam ash-Sha'rani, *Tanbih Al-Mughtarrin*, p. 41.

Such great emphasis on morality and on making it a natural disposition of the child is due to the following: "True morality begets clairvoyance, which brings forth sound habits. This results in commendable qualities that contribute to righteous deeds, which, in turn, lead to the satisfaction of Allah that produces permanent reign. On the other hand, bad manners beget unsound minds, which lead to offensive habits. It results in ill-naturedness, which induces corrupt deeds that prompt bitter speech and invoke the anger and wrath of Allah which bring about permanent ignominy."[1]

The righteous predecessors followed the path of directing their children's attention towards the importance of morality and bequeathing it to them, so let us have a glimpse at their approach.

Examples from the life of the righteous predecessors

Ruwaym ibn Ahmad al-Baghdadi advised his son saying, "Make your deeds like salt and your morality like flour, i.e. consolidate your morality making it greater. More morality with fewer deeds is better than less morality with more deeds."[2]

1. Al-Mawardi, *Nasihat Al-Muluk*, p. 173.
2. Imam al-Qarafi, *Al-Furuq*, vol. 3, p. 96.

Ibrahim ibn al-Habib ibn ash-Shahid mentioned that his father advised him, "Keep close to jurists and scholars, study under them and learn from them morality and righteousness. This is better, for me, than learning much in *Hadith*."[1] This enables the child to learn morality along with *Hadith*. Otherwise, if he learned *Hadith* before morality, this would lead him to deal badly with the *hadiths* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and this would lead aberration in his heart.

One of the righteous predecessors told his son, "O son! It is better, for me, that you learn one matter of morality than to learn seventy matters of knowledge."

Abu Zakariyya al-'Anbari said, "Knowledge without morality is like fire without wood, while morality without knowledge is like a soul without a body."[2]

In addition, what are the moral traits that the Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized to be instilled in children? On reviewing the purified Sunnah, it appeared that there are nine types of morality:

1. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Aj-Gami' Li Akhlaq Ar-Rawi and Adab as-Sami'*, vol. 1, p. 17.
2. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Aj-Jami`*, vol. 1, p. 17.

(1) The morality of behaving well with parents

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a man walking with a boy. He (peace be upon him) asked the boy (about the man), "*Who is this*?" The boy answered, "He is my father." Then the Prophet said, "*Do not walk in front of him or provoke his cursing*."[1] An-Nawawi explained that it means that you should not do anything that might drive your father to curse you, you should not sit before he sits and you should not call him by his name.

Also, Abu Ghassan ad-Dabbi said, "I was walking with my father along the outskirts of Al-Herrah, when I met Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him). He, then, asked me, "Who is this?" I said, "He is my father." He said, "Do not walk in front of your father, but behind or next to him. Do not let anybody come between you, or climb a roof lest you should arouse his fear and do not eat a slice of meat that he looks at, because he might have an appetite for it."[2]

Al-Qurtubi, in his *Tafsir*, mentioned that Abu al-Baddah at-Tajibi said, "I said to Sa`id ibn

1. Imam an-Nawawi, *Al-Adhkar*.

2. *Majma` Az-Zawa'id*, vol. 8, p. 136.

al-Musayyib, 'I have understood every verse in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an that speaks about behaving well with parents except the one that reads, ﴿*But address them in terms of honor*﴾" He answered me, 'To address them as the sinful slave addresses his rough master.'"[1]

Tag ad-Din as-Subki said, "I was sitting in the hallway of my house when a dog approached. I said, 'Go away! Son of dog.' Then my father rebuked me. I asked, 'Isn't it a dog; a son of dog?' He said, 'This is permissible on condition that it is not said with contempt.' I said that this benefit is for me to know."

Thus, let the motto of the children when they learn or avail of something from their parents be that they say, "This is beneficial for me to know," to please their parents and also to get accustomed to being humble towards them. May Allah guide us all towards it.

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*If the parent gets pleased when he looks at his son, then, the son will have the reward given to the one who frees a slave.*" The Companions said, "O Messenger of Allah! What if the father looks at his son three

1. Al-Qurtubi, *Tafsir*, vol. 10, p. 343.

hundred and sixty times?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*Allah is the Greater.*"[1]

Also, Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said, "Whoever looks in the face of his parents with mercy, surely, Allah will give him the reward of a completely accepted and rewarded pilgrimage."[2]

Finally, we quote a righteous scholar - al-Walid ibn Numayr - establishing a clear way of implanting morality in children through the behavior of their parents with them saying, "I heard my father saying, 'Our predecessors used to say: Allah grants piety and parents grant morality.'"[3]

For the child to enhance his good manners, parents should advise him to follow the righteous scholars and to learn morality at their hands. Thus, the child, to achieve full benefit, needs to learn good manners in communicating with scholars.

(2) The morality of behaving well with scholars

Imam an-Nawawi said, "What is mentioned regarding behaving well with parents applies to

1. Reported by at-Tabarani.
2. Al-Minawi, *Sharh Al-Qadir*, vol. 5, p. 483.
3. Reported by al-Bukhari.

scholars; rather they command more, as scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets. Thus, a child should learn to respect and revere them. He should learn to lower his wing to them, treat them gently and hasten to serve them."

Imam al-Ghazali (may Allah have mercy on him) quoted Yahya ibn Mu`adh as saying, "Scholars are more merciful towards the nation of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) than their fathers and mothers. Some people wonder, 'How come?' He said, 'Their fathers and mothers protect them against the fire (hardships) of the present life, while scholars protect them against the Hellfire.'"[1]

Therefore, it is important that the children learn to behave well in the presence of scholars and to revere them.

Abu Umamah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*Luqman addressed his son saying, 'O son! Attend to scholars and listen to the sages because Allah infuses life in the dead heart through the light of wisdom in the way he infuses life in the dead land through rain.*'"[2]

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1. Imam al-Ghazali, *Ihia' `Ulum Ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 11.
2. Reported by at-Tabarani.

Moreover, `Ubadah ibn as-Samit narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*He who does not revere the elders, have mercy on the young nor esteem scholars is not from among my Ummah.*"[1]

Also, Abu Umamah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*Only a hypocrite makes light of the following three; the aged man who spent all his life as a Muslim, a man of knowledge and a fair judge.*"[2]

Also, the children of the righteous predecessors behaved well with scholars. The children of the Prophet's Companions of al-Muhajirin and al-Ansar[3] who used to attend the session of Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib could not ask him a question unless he initiated speech or was questioned by a Companion; therefore, they listened to Sa`id's answer.

In addition, the major scholar of the *Ummah* `Abdullah ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) who was of sound morals, set an example of good manners during his seeking knowledge from the Companions. He said, "When the Prophet (peace

1. Reported by Imam Ahmad and at-Tabarani.
2. Reported by at-Tabarani.
3. Al-Muhajirin refers to the Migrants and al-Ansar refers to the Supporters of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

be upon him) died, I said to a man from al-Ansar, 'Come on, let's seek knowledge from the Companions of the Prophet as they are now numerous.' The man retorted, 'O Ibn `Abbas! Do you suppose that people will be in need of your knowledge while there are such numbers of the great Companions?' The man overlooked it while I started asking the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When it came to my knowledge that a Companion had reported a *hadith*, I would stick to his door while he was taking a nap (of the noon). Thus, I made my mantel a pillow and slept at his door, with the wind blowing dust on me, until he came out and saw me. Then he said, 'O cousin of the Prophet, why did you come? You should rather ask that I come to you and then I would come.' I said, 'No, I should rather come to you.' Then, I asked him about the *hadith*. This man of al-Ansar lived till he, later, saw people crowd asking (seeking knowledge from) me. Then he said, 'This young man was wiser than me.'"[1]

Al-Hasan al-Basry (may Allah be pleased with him) advised his son saying, "O son! When you attend to scholars, keep to listening more than you speak, listen well just as you speak well and do not interrupt anybody, but wait until he finishes his speech."

1. *Safahat Min Sabr Al-`Ulama'*, second edition, p. 37.

Quoting the good manners of the Companion Samrah ibn Jundub in the presence of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It was reported that Samrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I was young during the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and I used to learn from him. Nothing could then prevent me from reporting (what I had learned) except that there are people (Companions) who are older than me."[1]

(3) The morality of respect and reverence

At-Tirmidhi reported that Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "An old man came seeking the Prophet (peace be upon him) and when the people slackened in making room for him, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, '*He is not among us who does not have mercy on the young or revere the old*'".[2]

Another narration reads, "*He is not among us who does not respect the old, have mercy on the young or admit the scholar his right place.*"[3]

Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet said, "*Honoring Allah in-*

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.
2. Reported by Imam Ahmad and at-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn `Abbas.
3. *Sahih Aj-Jami`*, No.: 5444.

volves respecting the aged Muslim, the one who memorized the Ever-Glorious Qur'an without exaggeration or disrespect and the fair ruler."[1]

Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*I dreamt that I was using Siwak*[2] *when two men (one older than the other) approached. Then I gave the Siwak to the younger. Then, it was said to me, 'Give it to the older.' Thus, I did so.*"[3]

Also, `Abdullah ibn Sahl and Muhaysah ibn Mas`ud set out to Khaybar, the inhabitants of which had a peace treaty with the Muslims at that time. They parted and later on Muhaysah came upon `Abdullah ibn Sahl and found him murdered agitating in his blood. He buried him and returned to Medina. `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Sahl, Muhaysah and Huwaysah, the sons of Mas`ud came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and `Abd ar-Rahman intended to talk, but the Prophet said (to him), "*Let the eldest of you speak.*"[4]

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1. Reported by Abu Dawud.
2. A piece of a branch or a root of a tree called al-Arak used as a toothbrush.
3. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.
4. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Hence, it is important to revere the older people and to let them speak first unless the young are asked to do.

(4) The morality of behaving well towards the Muslim brothers

The Prophet (peace be upon him) permits no brother, whether young or old, to brandish a weapon in the face of his brother to frighten him.

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*He who brandishes a weapon towards his brother, the angels invoke curse upon him even if he is his real brother so long as he does not abandon it (the pointing of weapon towards one's Muslim brother).*"[1]

He (peace be upon him) also emphasized for children that the elder brother enjoys a special rank in Islam because he shoulders the responsibility of bringing up his brothers and is regarded as the breadwinner of the family. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*The elder among the brothers is as the father.*"[2]

Thus, if the parents implant in their elder son love and kindness towards his younger brothers and

1. Reported by Muslim.

2. Reported by at-Tabarani.

implant in the later estimation and respect towards the elder brother, then the family will be well-balanced with each member knowing his rights as well as his duties.

(5) The morality of behaving well towards the neighbors

The Islamic *Shari`ah* has granted the neighbor great rights to strengthen the ties among the Muslim society. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised the parents to teach their children some morals, concerning the neighbor, such as feeling his pains, not hurting or vexing him or any of his children. He (peace be upon him) said, "*If you buy a kind of fruit, present him (neighbor) with some, if you do not want to do so, then hide it and do not let your child go out and bother his child with it.*"[1]

It is a Prophetic advice that parents should teach their children not to pester the neighbor's children.

(6) The morality of seeking permission

It is obligatory for all Muslims, young and old, to ask for permission before entering a place. Not only the old, but also the young companions were

1. Reported by al-Khariti and at-Tabarani.

acquainted with this kind of behavior. The Ever-Glorious Qur'an stresses the importance of seeking permission in more than one verse.

In addition, Imam al-Bukhari reported that Abu Musa al-Ash`ari (may Allah be pleased with him) sought permission to see `Umar ibn al-Khattab. He was not granted permission as `Umar was busy. Thus, Abu Musa went back. When `Umar finished his work, he questioned, "I heard the voice of `Abdullah ibn Qays, where is he?" They said that he went back. Thus, `Umar called for him. When `Abdullah came he said, "We were ordered to turn back if not permitted to enter." `Umar asked him for a proof in support of that. Therefore, he set off to the place of al-Ansar and asked them. They said that no one would testify to that but the youngest of them, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri. Abdullah took Abu Sa`id to `Umar. `Umar asked, "Is there anything of the Prophet's tradition (Sunnah) that I do not know? Did the work in the trade distract me?"

Thus, it is apparent that `Umar, the commander of the believers, has forgotten that if someone is not permitted to enter a place, he should go back without any feelings of anger or irritation. The witness to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was the

young male companion Abu Said al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with all the Companions of the Prophet).

The Ever-Glorious Qur'an trains the child to ask for permission and orders parents to teach him this morality. The ruling differs gradually according to the state of the child. Before he reaches puberty the child should ask for permission to enter his parents place at three critical times of the day; before the *Fajr* (dawn prayer), at noon and after the *`Isha'* (late-night prayer); as these are the times when parents go to bed in special garments.

Almighty Allah says,

> ﴿*O you who believe! Let your legal slaves and slave-girls, and those among you who have not come to the age of puberty ask your permission (before they come to your presence) on three occasions; before Fajr prayer, and while you put off your clothes for the noonday , and after the 'Isha' prayer. (These) three times are of privacy for you, other than these times there is no sin on you or on them to move about, attending (helping) you each other. Thus, Allah makes clear the Ayat (the Verses of this*

Qur'an, showing proofs for the legal aspects of permission for visits, etc.) to you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴿

(An-Nur: 58)

By the time the child reaches puberty, he should ask for permission to enter as indicated by the following Qur'anic verse, ﴾*And when the children among you come to puberty, then let them (also) ask for permission, as those senior to them (in age). Thus, Allah makes clear His Ayat for you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.*﴿ (An-Nur: 59)

How did the Prophet (peace be upon him) seek permission?

One wonders how we should stand knocking at a door. Should we face the door or stand aside or what? In answering this question, `Abdullah ibn Busr said, "Whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) knocked on a door, he did not face it. He used to stand at the right or the left side and if it was permitted, he would enter and if not, he would return."[1]

1. Reported by Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

The Prophet (peace be upon him), the ideal, sought the children's permission

Right is always undoubted. Therefore, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is an obligatory act on all Muslims whatever their rank is. He (peace be upon him) - the leader, teacher and guide of the *Ummah* - stated the right of the child in the *hadith* narrated by Sahl ibn Sa`d as-Sa`idi who said, "A drink (milk mixed with water) was brought to Allah's Prophet who drank some of it. A boy was sitting to his right, and some old men to his left. Allah's Prophet asked the boy, '*Do you allow me to give the rest of the drink to these people*?' The boy said, 'O Allah's Prophet! I will not give preference to anyone over me to drink the rest of it from which you have drunk.' Allah's Prophet then handed the bowl (of drink) to the boy."[1]

(7) The morality of behaving well during having food

`Umar ibn Abi Salamah said, "I was a boy under the care of Allah's Prophet and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So, Allah's Prophet said to me, '*O boy! Mention the Name of Allah*

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

and eat with your right hand and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.' Since then, I have applied those instructions when eating."[1]

Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "My mother, Umm Sulaym, sent me with an urn of dates to the Prophet (peace be upon him) but I did not find him. He was invited for food by a near servant of him. When I approached, he was eating, so he invited me to eat with him. He (the servant) made porridge of meat and squash. The squash pleased the Prophet (peace be upon him), so I started to accumulate and push it near him. When he (peace be upon him) finished eating, he went home. Then, I put the urn in his hands and he (peace be upon him) began to eat and distribute them until he finished it."[2]

What should you do if a child comes around while you are eating?

At-Tabarani reported that Is-haq ibn Yahya ibn Talhah said, "I was accompanying `Isa ibn Talhah in the mosque when as-Sa'ib ibn Yazid entered. `Isa sent me to him saying, 'Go to that sheikh and say to him my cousin ibn Talhah asks if you had seen the

1. Reported by al Bukhari and Muslim.

2. Reported by Ahmad.

Prophet (peace be upon him)?' When I asked the sheikh, he said, 'Yes. When I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) I approached him along with some boys. He (peace be upon him) was eating dates with some Companions. Then, he (peace be upon him) gave us a handful of dates and patted us on the heads.'"

Imam al-Ghazali in his book *Ihia' `Ulum Ad-Din* referred to the morals of having food which a child needs. They read as follows:

A- He should eat but with his right hand and say: In the Name of Allah.

B- He should eat of whatever is near to him.

C- He should not precede others in having food.

D- He should not stare at food or at those who eat.

E- He should not gulp down.

F- He should chew (food) well.

G- He should not dirty his hands or dress.

H- He should get used to various kinds of food without sticking to one kind only.

I- He should be taught that the one who eats much is like an animal.

J- He should be reproached for eating much and praised for eating less and not paying much attention to food.

(8) The morality of good appearance

The Prophet (peace be upon him) cared much about the outward appearance of the child; his haircut, his dress, etc.

The manner of cutting hair

`Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said, "The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a boy with part of his head shaved and part left unshaven. He forbade the children to do that saying, 'Shave it all or leave it all.'"[1]

`Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said, "Allah's Messenger forbade *al-Qaza`* (leaving a tuft of hair here and there after shaving one's head)."[2]

Al-Qaza` is of four kinds:

(1) To cut some of the hair from different points of the head.

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.

2. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

(2) To cut the hair on the middle of his head and leave the hair on its sides, like the Christian deacons.

(3) To cut hair on the sides of his head and leave that in the middle.

(4) To cut the hair on the front part of his head and leave the hair on the back. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) personally supervised cutting the hair of some children

`Abdullah ibn Ja`far said, "After the death of Ja`far the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave the children of Ja`far three days time to visit them. He then came to visit them and said, '*Do not weep over my brother after this day ... Bring to me the children of my brother.*' We were brought to him as if we were chicken. He said, '*Bring a barber to me*'. He then ordered that our heads be shaved."[1]

Cutting the hair of girls

Asma' (the daughter of Abu Bakr) said, "A woman came to Allah's Messenger and said, 'I married my daughter to someone, but she became

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.

sick and all her hair fell out, and (because of that) her husband does not like her. May I let her use false hair?' On that the Prophet cursed such a lady as artificially lengthening (her or someone else's) hair or got her hair lengthened artificially."[1]

Thus, the Muslim children treat their hair in a distinguished manner. They neither drool over changeable fashion of hairdos nor blindly follow irresponsible actors or actresses. They only follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Choosing the dress color

'Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`As narrated, "Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) saw me in two clothes dyed in saffron, whereupon he (peace be upon him) asked, '*Has your mother ordered you to do so*?' I said, 'I will wash them.' He said, '*But burn them.*'"[2]

In his *Ihia' `Ulum Ad-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali said concerning the dress color, "It is advisable that the child should learn to like white dresses and avoid wearing colored or striped ones. He should know

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.
2. Reported by Muslim.

that these dresses are worn by women and gay persons and that respectable men refuse to put on such type of clothes. Whenever we see a boy wearing these unacceptable colored clothes we should reproach him for that and keep our children away from him."

The prohibition of wearing silk for males

According to the Prophetic rule of not following the disbelievers in dressing, the child should learn from the very beginning the Prophet's way of dressing and avoid the prohibited dresses.

`Abdullah ibn Yazid said, "We were at Abdullah's house (i.e. ibn Mas`ud) when one of his sons came while he was wearing a silken dress. `Abdullah asked him, 'Who dressed you?' The boy answered, 'My mother.' Then, `Abdullah said to the boy, 'Rend it and tell your mother to dress you in a different one.'"[1]

Concerning the prohibition of wearing silk for men, Imam al-Kasani (may Allah be pleased with him) said in *Bada'i` As-Sana'i`*, "The prohibition includes all males, whether young or old, as the

1. Reported by at-Tabarani. Mentioned by al-Haytham in his *Al-Majma`*, v. 5, p. 144.

Prophet (peace be upon him) said about silk and gold, '*These both (gold and silk) are forbidden for the males of my Ummah.*' However, if the male wearing either of them is young, the sinner then is not the young boy but the one who dressed him."

(9) The morality of listening attentively during the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an

Ibn Jubayr (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the verse that reads, ﴾*So, when the Qur'an is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy*﴿ was revealed regarding a boy. Whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited a verse, the child would recite it (with him).

The Second Principle

Truthfulness

Truthfulness is an essential element in the value system of Islam which needs great effort to be implanted in the child. That is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized that parents should behave well before the child. They are required not to lie to him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) laid a general rule that the child is a human being with complete rights among which is not to ignore or cheat him by any means.

`Abdullah ibn `Amir said, "One day, my mother called me while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was sitting at our home. She said, 'Come, I will give you something.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked her, '*What is it which you want to give him*?' She said 'I want to give him some dates.' Then he (peace

be upon him) said, '*Had you not given him something, it would have been recorded against you as a lie.*'"[1]

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*Whoever says to a boy, 'Come here I will give you something without the intention of giving him, it would be recorded against him as a lie.*"[2]

Furthermore, Rabi`ah ibn Shaybah said, "I asked al-Hussayn ibn `Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both), 'What did you learn from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)?' He answered, 'Favor what you do not doubt over what you doubt, as truthfulness is tranquility and lie is doubtfulness.'"

The Righteous predecessors took pains to inculcate such morality, which includes punctuality in the children.

Imam as-Sam`ani reported that `Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "Beware telling tales; false tales, as lying is improper whether seriously or in jest and do not make a promise to your child and then break it."[3]

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1. Reported by Abu Dawud.
2. Reported by Ahmad.
3. *Adab Al-Imla' Wa Al-Istimla'*, p. 40.

The Third Principle

Keeping Secrets

The Prophet (peace be upon him) cared much about teaching the child to keep secrets as the basis of his present and further welfare and hence the welfare of the family, in particular, and society in general.

The child who is trained to keep secrets grows confident, strong-willed and gets used to minding his tongue. This creates social confidence.

'Abdullah ibn Ja`far narrated, "The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) one day made me mount behind him and he confided to me something in secret which I would not disclose to anybody; and the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) liked the concealment provided by a lofty place or cluster of dates (while answering the call of nature)."[1]

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1. Reported by Muslim.

The Fourth Principle

Honesty

It is a noble trait which was ingrained in the character of the Prophet (peace be upon him) from childhood till prophecy. That is why the atheist (idolaters) used to call him, "The honest and the truthful." This is a good example for every child to follow as it will enable him when he grows up to call for Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) on a sound basis.

He (peace be upon him) defined the responsibility of the child concerning his father's money. He should be reliable in managing the wealth of his father without squandering nor wasting. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*A man is the guardian of his father's property and is responsible for it.*"

Out of the Prophet's care about implanting this morality in the children, we notice that he punished

the child who lacked such a trait of being trustworthy. Imam an-Nawawi reported that `Abdullah ibn Busr (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "My mother sent me with a row of vine to the Prophet (peace be upon him) but I ate of it before I reached him. And when I came to him, he (peace be upon him) boxed my ears slightly and said, "*O fiddler!*"

The Fifth Principle

Forsaking Grudge

This moral principle creates a psychological balance in man, endows him with a sense of philanthropy towards his society and elevates his good feelings.

The Prophet invited the youth embodied in Anas ibn Malik to clean his soul from ill intentions by night and day; he should forgive those who do wrong to him and empty his heart from the temptations of the devil.

Anas ibn Malik said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) told me, "*O son! If you can morn and eve while having no intention of fraud towards anybody then do that. O son! This is an act of my tradition (Sunnah) and that who revives my Sunnah revives me and that who revives me will accompany me in Paradise.*"[1]

Thus, it is clear that the man who frees his heart from fraud, grudge, envy and bad intentions will secure the company of the Prophet in paradise.

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1. An-Nawawi, *Al-Adhkar*.

Conclusion

It is better in conclusion to present an example of the Prophet's behavior towards children for us to follow, as he is the leader and the ideal.

Anas ibn Malik said, "I served the Prophet for ten years, and he never said to me 'Pshaw!' and never blamed me by saying, "Why did you do so or why did you not do so?"[1]

Also, Muslim mentioned in his narration that Anas said, "Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) had the best disposition amongst people. He sent me on an errand one day, and I said, 'By Allah, I will not go.' I had, however, this idea in my mind that I would do as Allah's Prophet had commanded me to do. I went out until I happened to come across children who had been playing in the street. In the meanwhile, Allah's Messenger came there and he caught me by the back of my neck. As I looked

1. Reported by al-Bukhari

towards him I found him smiling and he said, '*Anas, did you go where I commanded you to go*?' I said, 'O Allah's Messenger, I am going.' Actually, I served him for nine years but I know not that he ever said to me about a thing which I had done why I did that, or about a thing I had left as to why I had not done that."

This indicates, if anything, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) great interest in implanting sound morals in children through practical examples. Providing children with good examples instills morality in them so that they can cope with materialistic challenges in their society. Being morally well built, they firmly cling to the Islamic principles against the pressures practiced by the disintegrated society of the present times.

May Allah guide us to good morals, patience, leniency and tolerance, as He is the Ever-Hearing and the Ever-Answering.



Part Two

Social Upbringing



The Principles of Social Upbringing

When we speak of social education, we mean that children must be taught to adapt to their own social milieu, with both adults and friends of the same age. He should learn to be confident, communicative and able to solve problems effectively and positively without being introverted. Also, he should learn how to give and take politely, to buy and sell and to mix with various kinds of people. As we reflect on the Prophetic *hadiths*, we find that the Prophet (peace be upon him) concentrated upon eight principles. They are as follows:

The First Principle: Allowing the Child to Attend Meetings Where Older People Discuss Various Issues.

The Second Principle: Assigning the Child to Fulfill Some Duties and Errands.

The Third Principle: Teaching the Child to Uphold and Practice the Sunnah of Greeting Muslims.

The Fourth Principle: Visiting the Child When He Is Ill.

The Fifth Principle: Helping the Child to Choose Suitable Friends from among his Playmates.

The Sixth Principle: Getting the Child Used to Buying and Selling.

The Seventh Principle: Permitting the Child to Attend Islamic Parties and Weddings.

The Eighth Principle: Allowing the Child to Spend a Night at the Home of Some Righteous Relatives.

The First Principle

Allowing the Child to Attend Meetings Where Older People Discuss Various Issues

In the era of the Prophet (peace be upon him) children used to attend his meetings along with their fathers, who accompanied them. Ibn `Umar narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "*Tell me of a tree which is similar to a Muslim; it brings forth its fruit at all times by Permission of its Lord, and its leaves never fall.*" I thought of the date-palm tree but I did not like to talk. Abu Bakr and `Umar were present but they did not talk. (As none knew the answer), he answered, "It is the date-palm tree." When I left with my father I said to him, "O father! I thought of the date-palm." He said,

"Why didn't you say it? Had you done so, it would have been dearer to me than such and such things." I said, "I noticed that Abu Bakr and you did not talk, so I did not like to answer."[1]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to intermingle with children. In this regard, Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to intermingle with us to the extent that he once said to my younger brother, '*O Abu `Umayr! What has an-Nughayr (a bird) done?*' He (the Prophet) performed prayer on a mat that had been spread out for us and he let us stand in rows behind him."[2]

Accompanying a child to attend the meetings of venerable people offers opportunities for him to overcome his imperfections and acquire knowledge. In this way, the educator can direct him towards further piety and encourage him to offer an answer when a question arises. Thus, he learns to speak politely after taking permission, his mind will develop, his soul will be refined and he will realize the proper way of speaking with older people. Accordingly, through training, the parents are

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

2. Reported by Ahmad.

preparing him step by step to communicate with the society around him. The case of a daughter with her mother is the same as that of a boy with his father, as we have already mentioned above.

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "`Umar used to permit me to attend the meeting of the people of Badr. `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf once said (to him), 'Why do you let this adolescent attend with us? How can it be while our children are his peers? He replied, 'He is of those that I have taught.' Then, he invited them and me (to show them my knowledge). He said, 'What do you understand of Allah's saying, ﴿*When comes the Help of Allah, and Victory, and thou dost see the People enter Allah's Religion in crowds, celebrate the Praises of thy Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness; for He is Oft-Returning (in forgiveness).*﴾ (An-Nasr: 1-3) Some of them said that Allah, Most High, commanded us to praise Him, and ask His forgiveness when His Help and Victory come. Others said, 'We do not know.' And some others kept silent. `Umar said to me, 'O Ibn `Abbas! Do you think the same?' I said, 'No'. He said, "Then what is your opinion?' I said, 'This refers to the instance of death of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Almighty Allah told him, ﴿*When*

comes the Help of Allah, and Victory, and thou dost see the People enter Allah's Religion in crowds﴿, *this is a token of your moment of death, so 'celebrate the Praises of thy Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness: for He is Oft-Returning (in forgiveness).'* `Umar said, 'This is the same thing that I know about this verse.'"[1]

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) walked with children and let them ride a horse or mule along with him without any disgust or contempt.

When he was a child, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to attend the meetings of those who were older than him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*When I was young I witnessed the pact of Mutayyibin along with my uncles. I would never break this pact even if I was given red camels.*"[2]

Both boys and girls are equally permitted to intermingle with older people. `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) drew attention to the benefit of this intermingling when they grew up. Among its benefits is that people come to know that so and so has a daughter of marriageable age.

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1. Reported by Ibn Sa`d, Ibn Jarir and at-Tabarani.
2. Reported by Ahmad.

In his *Musannaf*, Imam `Abd ar-Raziq narrated on the authority of Ibn Jurayj who said, "It came to my knowledge that `Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) said, 'Let the girl who did not reach maturity be eyed; as her cousins may desire to marry her."[1]

Children can intermingle with older people via various ways and means. Those who are advanced in age can sit with children, talk to them, advise, and guide them. Also, they can convey the directions of the leader of the Muslim *Ummah* (Nation) to them. The righteous predecessors used to sit with children to convey the directions of the leader to them so as to help them form strong personalities.

1. *Al-Musannaf*, vol. 6, p. 156.

The Second Principle

Assigning the Child to Fulfill Some Duties and Errands

Actually, this is an important factor in the social education of a child. Fulfilling the needs of the home or that of the parents has an effective and positive role in the child's life. It affects his childhood because he recognizes the mysteries of life and thereby feels happy and enjoys confidence in facing its hardships. It also affects his future because through this fulfillment, he gains skills and experience that enable him to continue his life with firm footsteps that know no weakness or deficiency.

It was reported on the authority of Thabit al-Banani that Anas ibn Malik said, "One day, I served the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and when I finished I thought that he would take a nap. So I went out to watch some boys while they were playing. Allah's Messenger (peace be upon

him) came and greeted the boys while they were playing and he called me. Then he sent me to do an errand for him. I went to fulfill this task and he waited for me until I returned. Consequently, I returned to my mother late, and when I came to her she said, 'What kept you?' I said, 'Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) sent me on an errand.' She asked, 'What was it?' I said, 'It is something secret and belongs to the Messenger of Allah.' Thereupon, she said, 'Do not then divulge the secret of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) to anyone.' Thabit said, 'Anas said to me, 'By Allah, if I were to tell anyone of it, then, O Thabit, I would have told you.'"[1]

A child should learn to prepare the dining table and to help his family with daily chores and to know the places of household items and their names.

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) was reported to have said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said (before daybreak), "*O Anas! I want to fast. Bring me something to eat.*" I brought him dates and a utensil full of water, and that was after Bilal had performed the call to prayer (the first *adhan*[2] for the Dawn prayer). He said, "*O*

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

2. Call to prayer.

Anas! Look for a man to invite him to eat with me." I invited Zayd ibn Thabit. He said, "I want the soup of *sawiq*[1] and I want to fast." The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "*And so do I.*" So he had the meal of *Suhur*[2] with him then he performed two *rak`a*s then he went out to prayer.[3]

This is an example of the practical education that ensures the child will never forget what he learned. It provides him with experience and forms his social personality by means of interacting with people and life. Also, it makes him self-confident and is not shaken by social situations, regardless of their degree of difficulty and harshness.

1. A kind of mush made of wheat or barely, and also with sugar and dates.
2. Last meal before Dawn.
3. Reported by an-Nasa'i.

The Third Principle

Teaching the Child to Uphold and Practice the Sunnah of Greeting Muslims

Giving *salams* is the Islamic way of greeting. In his everyday life, a child meets people of many different social classes, thus, he needs to know the key to talk with them.

We have learned a polite and friendly style from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and his Companions in inculcating the *sunnah* of giving *salams* in the hearts of children. The correct way is that the older person should begin by greeting children in order to show them how to greet others. After this practice is established, they will observe this by initiating greetings with others using *salams*.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he once passed by some boys and greeted them and

then said, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to do that."

The child should get accustomed to initiating the greetings to his parents or any older people, beginning by giving *salams* when he enters the house.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "*The riding person should greet the walking one, and the walking one should greet the sitting one, and the small number of persons should greet the large number of persons, and the young should greet the old.*"[1]

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) was reported to have said that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said, "*O Son! If you entered upon your family, you should greet them for it would be a blessing upon you and your household.*"[2]

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.
2. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.

The Fourth Principle

Visiting the Child When He Is Ill

Visiting children when they are sick is among the factors that help establish social relations with them. When a child observes that old people visit him, he will reciprocate this good habit. This visit will also help to alleviate his pains. Truly, if this visit is supported by inviting a child to Islam, straightening his faith, asking Allah for forgiveness and repentance, it will have a great benefit and double reward. This is actually what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did as reported in the following *hadith*.

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "A young Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he became ill, so the Prophet (peace be upon him) went to visit him. He sat near his head and asked him to embrace Islam. The boy looked at his father, who was sitting there; the latter

told him to obey Abu al-Qasim (the Prophet) and the boy embraced Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) came out saying, '*All praises and thanks are due to Allah Who saved him from the Hell-fire.*'"[1]

Thus, we find that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to make use of any chance to inculcate something good in the soul of a child, teaching him useful knowledge.

1. Reported by al-Bukhari.

The Fifth Principle

Helping the Child to Choose Suitable Friends from among his Playmates

Friendship is a common social phenomenon among all people. Naturally, the human soul inclines towards intermingling with people, knowing them, and choosing a group of them to establish bonds of brotherhood and affection.

As a matter of fact, if parents succeed in choosing a good friend for their child, they would provide an important key in reforming their child and developing him. However, if we know the fact that a child will inevitably choose another child to be his friend, it is more preferable that we exert some effort to help him in the process of choosing a righteous friend, who will help him obey Allah and increase correct Islamic behavior. Thereby, we find Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) playing with

children during his childhood, and when he became a Messenger, he used to greet them whenever he passed by, while they were playing. He never reprimanded them or drove them away, rather, he used to supplicate for them that Allah's Mercy and Peace would be showered upon them. Actually, this indicates the Prophet's keenness that a child should be brought up in a social environment among children and not to be isolated.

The Sixth Principle

Getting the Child Used to Buying and Selling

The Prophet's interest in educating a child socially and economically appears in his desire for a child to experience all fields of life in order to interact with the society in which he grows up. The process of buying and selling lets a child gain a strong social movement while he is dealing with his peers and through it he will be accustomed to growing up in this life and benefit from his time in doing useful things. Also, it makes him earn social and psychological confidence and changes him into an upright human being. Step by step, he will learn the seriousness in life and keep away from trivial pleasures. He will be accustomed to giving and taking and understanding life in a realistic way. He will be far from the selfishness and weak character of children who are pampered.

In addition, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to ask Allah to bless children. According to Abu Ya`la and at-Tabarani on the authority of `Amr ibn Hurayth who said that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) passed by `Abdullah ibn Ja`far while he was selling as a child. He said, "*O Lord! Grant him blessing in his selling,*" or he said, "*in his transaction.*"

The Seventh Principle

Permitting the Child to Attend Islamic Parties and Weddings

This is another gathering place to which children may go and thus know the correct and righteous way to celebrate important events. They may watch the older members of their community and hear friendly discussions. Consequently, their souls will be pleased and their feelings motivated.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) diu not prohibit young men from attending wedding ceremonies and used to supplicate Allah for all the attendants including the children.

In this regard, `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Suhayb reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw the women and children (of the Ansar) coming forward. `Abd al-`Aziz said, "I think that Anas said, 'They were returning from a wedding

party." The Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up and said thrice, "*By Allah! You (i.e. the Ansar) are from the most beloved people to me.*"[1]

Thus, we notice the Messenger's interest in educating a child socially and accompanying him to the gatherings of the older members of the community and the young, public and private meetings and the places of wedding parties.

1. Reported by Ahmad.

The Eighth Principle

Allowing the Child to Spend a Night at the Home of some Righteous Relatives

When the child has the opportunity to stay at the home of righteous people, it trains him by seeing another family and he learns how to deal with his relatives and benefit from their knowledge, understanding and worship. It also trains him to keep good relations with his relatives and increases the bonds of affection between them. Additionally, it affects him greatly after he has grown up, when he remembers his visits and thus he narrates this story and is proud of it. It also supports good social relations. No doubt, there is a great blessing if parents draw a child's attention to the benefit of staying at the house of one of his relatives or pious friends.

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) used to teach children keenness to visit good relatives and benefiting from them.

Al-Bukhari reported Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) as having said, "I stayed overnight in the house of my aunt, Maymunah bint al-Harith, the Prophet's wife." In another narration rather than al-Bukhari, "To watch the way the Prophet (peace be upon him) performs prayer."

Conclusion

Finally, we would like to put at your hands, dear reader, the practical example of the Prophet's gatherings with children. Anas was reported as having said, "The Prophet was the best of all the people in character. I had a brother called Abu `Umar, who, I think, had been newly weaned. Whenever he (that child) was brought to the Prophet, the Prophet used to say, '*O Abu `Umayr! What did an-Nughayr (nightingale) (do)?*' It was a nightingale with which he used to play. Sometimes the time of the Prayer would arrive while he (the Prophet) was in our house. He would order that the carpet underneath him be swept and sprayed with water, and then he would stand up (for the prayer) and we would line up behind him, and he would lead us in prayer."[1]

It is noteworthy here to mention a practical explanation and a nice comment presented by Ibn Hajar, who was one of the greatest interpreters of *hadith*. Through his commentary on this *hadith* you will

1. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

realize the fact that we can derive great lessons from the prophetic way of raising children. You will also realize that the Islamic *Ummah* has neglected the bases of educating children. This lapse occurred when it started to believe in Western philosophies and turned away from the footsteps of our Prophet.

Commenting on this *hadith*, ibn Hajar said, "This *hadith* includes various benefits compiled by Abu al-`Abbas Ahmad at-Tabari, the Shafi`i jurist, who is called Ibn al-Qas. He declared that in this *hadith* there are sixty lessons of *Fiqh* and the arts of worship, then, he outlined them in detail. I summarized these lessons including his objectives then I followed him by my comments. He said the following,

1- It is permissible to jest and joke and that joking with a child who is not at the age of discrimination is also permissible.

2- Avoiding pride and haughtiness.

3- Showing kindness and clemency towards one's friend whether he is a young or old and asking about his condition.

4- The permissibility of nicknaming the one who has no child.

5- It is permissible for a child to play with birds.

6- It is permissible for parents to leave their child to play with permissible things.

7- The permissibility of spending money on lawful matters with which one plays.

8- The permissibility of keeping a bird in a cage and clipping its wings.

9- The permissibility of delivering a speech to a child.

10- The permissibility of giving a name even if it is for an animal.

11- Considering the minds and thoughts of people when dealing with them.

12- When one visits people, he should express his sympathy towards them. This is derived from the Prophet's shaking hands with Anas, joking with Abu `Umayr on the bed of Umm Sulaym and leading them in prayer in their house.

13- Passing one's hand gently over the head of the young as a kind of fondling.

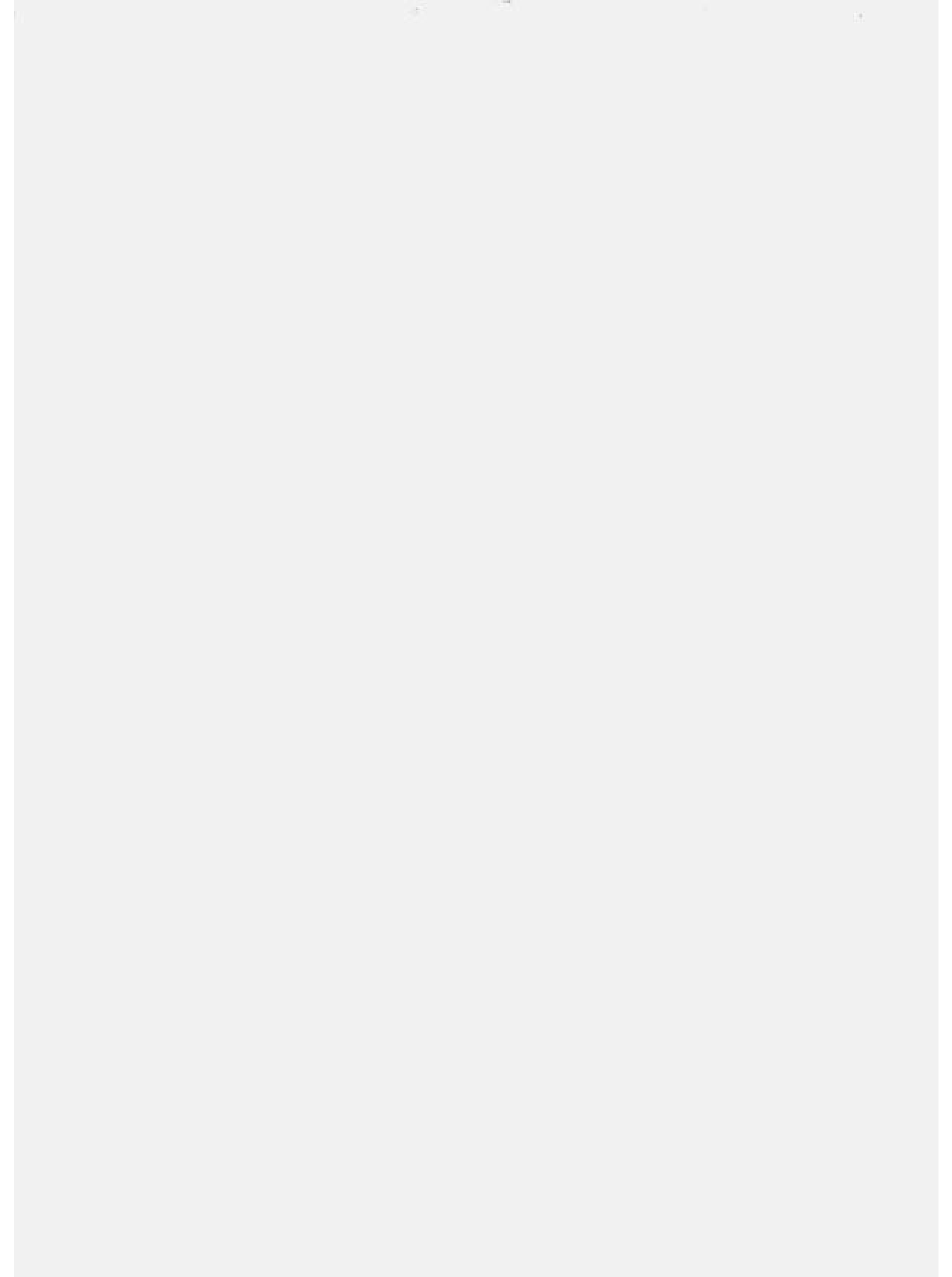
14- Inviting a person to give him a name when there is no harm.

15- The permissibility of asking a question even if the questioner knows the answer. This is derived from the Prophet's saying, "What did an-Nughayr (nightingale) do?," after he knew that he was dead.

There are different opinions in regard to the permissibility of playing with a bird. Ibn Hajar continues to say, "Abu `Abd al-Malik said, 'This ruling may be abrogated regarding punishing animals.' Al-Qurtubi said, 'There is no abrogation but there is a concession for a child to hold a bird as a kind of amusement for him. Also, he is not permitted to be cruel to the bird in any way. Ibn Hajar added, "Among the lessons that were not mentioned by Ibn al-Qas or others regarding the story of Abu `Umayr, is that Imam Ahmad reported that this child became ill and then died and this *hadith* was in the story of his death and what happened to Umm Sulaym when she concealed this news from Abu Talhah (her husband) until he slept with her. In the morning she told him the news and thereby he complained about her to the Prophet (peace be upon him) who supplicated to Allah for them. She became pregnant and then gave birth to a baby boy. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) brought him to the Prophet (peace be upon him) who blessed him and called him `Abdullah."

Thus, we find that the process of the social education of a child plays an important role in constructing his personality, straightening and amending him and that it helps him to achieve self-confidence.

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